

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 USNATO 03471 051946Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----130595 051951Z /41

O 051934Z APR 78

FM USMISSION USNATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0506

S E C R E T USNATO 03471

NODIS CHEROKEE

PERSONAL FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O.11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: NATO, PARM

SUBJECT: THE ERW DECISION

-

1. YOUR CALL THIS AFTERNOON CAME WHILE THIS MESSAGE WAS IN PREPARATION AND WAS MOST WELCOME. ON THE BASIS OF YOUR CALL, I HAVE ARRANGED WITH LUNS FOR A RESTRICTED PRIVATE MEETING OF PERMREPS ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON APRIL 7.

2. PUBLIC OPINION AND PRESSURES ON NATO GOVERNMENTS, ENCOURAGED AND ABETTED BY UNREMITTING AND INCREASINGLY BOLD SOVIET CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE WEAPON, HAVE NOW BUILT TO SUCH A POINT THAT, NO MATTER WHAT OUR ACTION ON ERW, THE ISSUE IS NOT GOING TO FADE AWAY AS THOUGH THE ISSUE DID NOT HAVE A LONG AND TORTURED HISTORY.

3. IT IS NOT TOO MUCH TO SAY THAT SINCE ABRUPT CANCELLATION OF MARCH 20 NAC MEETING, WHEN THERE WAS GENERAL FEELING OF ANTICIPATION HERE THAT AT LONG LAST NATO WAS READY TO SHOW ITS METTLE AND ACT AFFIRMATIVELY TO TIE A DIFFICULT WEAPONS DECISION TO PURPOSEFUL ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS, THIS HEADQUARTERS AND THE ASSEMBLED REPS OF NATO GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN IN A STATE OF SHOCK AND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 USNATO 03471 051946Z

APPREHENSION. THE LETDOWN FROM THE HIGH PRE-MARCH 20 ANTICIPATION HAS BROUGHT A SERIOUS MORALE PROBLEM AND HAS NOW BEGUN TO DEEPEN INTO ACTIVE CONCERN ON PART OF LEADING MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE SECRETARIAT OVER THE GENERAL WELL BEING OF THE ALLIANCE. FROM PRESS AND OTHER REPORTS WE GET HERE, I HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE PERMREPS ARE OUT AHEAD OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS IN THIS CONCERN.

SEVERAL PERMREPS HAVE PLEADED THAT WE MUST ACT WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY OR RUN REAL RISKS THAT EVEN MODERATE POSITIONS OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS WILL UNRAVEL. IT IS HIGH TIME WE MOVE TO CLEAR UP THE UNCERTAINTY AND WE MUST NOT LET FRIDAY MEETING SLIP.

4. UNDERLYING THEME OF OUR ALLIES' COMMENTS OVER PAST TWO WEEKS HAS BEEN THEIR PERCEPTION OF WAVERING US LEADERSHIP, A LEADERSHIP WHICH WAS SO EFFECTIVELY DISPLAYED AND GRATEFULLY RECEIVED AT THE LONDON SUMMIT. THERE IS GENERAL WORRY HERE THAT US IS SEEN IN EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION TO BE KNUCKLING UNDER TO SOVIET PRESSURES. COMMON COMMENT IS THAT ERW MUST BE A POWERFULLY GOOD WEAPON OR ELSE SOVIETS WOULD NOT HAVE MOUNTED SUCH A MASSIVE EFFORT TO TORPEDO IT. SEVERAL COLLEAGUES SUCH AS PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED DEEP SEATED FEARS THAT THE AFFAIR IS INCREASINGLY PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF THEIR INTERNAL LEFTIST MOVEMENTS, FROM PORTUGAL TO NETHERLANDS AND NORWAY. WE ARE TOLD HERE THAT GERMAN CONCERN AT TOP MOST LEVEL WAS EVEN DEEPER THAN GENSCHER EXPRESSED (AS WE ARE LED TO BELIEVE) IN WASHINGTON.

5. NOW WE ALL KNOW THAT THE EUROPEANS WANT IT BOTH WAYS. THEY ARE DOWNRIGHT PROPRIETARY IN RESERVING THE RIGHT TO EXAMINE INTENTLY EVERY AMERICAN ACTION AND TO FIND A WAY TO CRITICIZE WHATEVER COURSE WE EMBARK ON. HOWEVER,
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 USNATO 03471 051946Z

NATO'S HISTORY IS FULL OF EXAMPLES THAT, WHEN THERE IS STRONG LEADERSHIP, THE ALLIANCE PROSPERS EVEN THOUGH, AS ON ANY TIGHT SHIP, THERE MAY BE SOME GRUMBLING. WHEN AMERICA IS INDECISIVE, THE ALLIANCE SUFFERS. THIS IS THE BURDEN OF THE LEADER.

6. WE HEAR FROM GERMAN SOURCES THAT DECISION FOR DEFERRAL OF ERW IS NOW ANTICIPATED. IF THAT IS ACCURATE, WHAT WE NEED FOR FRIDAY MEETING IS A DECISION IN POSITIVE TERMS, WHICH ALSO HOLDS SOVIETS TO ACCOUNT IN ARMS CONTROL PERSPECTIVE AS PRESIDENT DID IN HIS WARSAW PRESS CONFERENCE. A SIMPLE STATEMENT OF DEFERRAL WOULD LEAVE US OPEN TO A CONTINUATION OF THE SAME EUROPE-WIDE CAMPAIGN OF RECENT MONTHS AIMED ONLY AT WESTERN DEFENSES. FURTHER, A DECISION FOR UNILATERAL RENUNCIATION IN HOPES OF CALLING FORTH SIMILAR RESTRAINT ON PART OF SOVIETS WOULD, IN LIGHT OF SOVIET ONGOING MILITARY BUILD-UP AND EXPANSIONIST BEHAVIOR PUMP ICE WATER INTO THE VEINS OF OUR ALLIES. THEN, TOO, IT WOULD HARDLY SEEM TO SQUARE WITH GROWING ALLIANCE-WIDE PERCEPTION OF SOVIET THREAT WHICH LED TO LONDON INITIATIVES. ALTHOUGH OTHER ALLIES ARE OFTEN OVER-TIMOROUS AND SOMETIMES LAGGARD, THEY NEVERTHELESS WANT DESPERATELY TO SEE

AMERICA SUCCEED AND ALLIANCE EFFECTIVENESS MAINTAINED.
THEY WILL RALLY BEHIND US.

7. NATO UNITY AT THE MAY SUMMIT IS OUR IMMINENT HURDLE.
BUT BEYOND WASHINGTON LIES THE CONTINUING NEED TO ENSURE
US CREDIBILITY AS THE LEADER OF THE ALLIANCE. BENNETT

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, MEETINGS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION, NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEPLOYMENT, CAT-C, CHEROKEE 4-5-78
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USNATO03471
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: PERSONAL FOR THE SECRETARY
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850101-2537, N780004-0280
Format: TEL
From: USNATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780488/aaaacwuy.tel
Line Count: 122
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7ba35cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3060939
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE ERW DECISION
TAGS: PARM, US, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7ba35cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014